

## October 2015 – Mayor's Message

With recent reports in the news about the raging wildfires in the western U.S., our Murray City Fire Department (MCFD) was able to aid with the Rapid Fire and Teepee Springs wildfire in Idaho by sending some of our firefighting equipment and three of our firefighters - Jeff Puls, Zach Hansen and Shiloh Neale. They were gone on a two-week deployment and just recently safely returned home, extremely tired, but excited they were able to be part of the bigger picture in helping fight some of the nation's current wildfires.

Currently we are facing one of the driest and most explosive wildfire seasons on record. In 2013, it was determined that the MCFD needed to be in a position to help others when in need by training their employees in wildland firefighting and getting the department and some of their equipment certified to help. Murray City submitted an application for certification with the Department of National Resources and after a long process, the department and two of the fire department vehicles were certified - an ambulance and the Aux, which is a four wheel drive pickup equipped with firehose and pump specifically designed to fight forest fires.

Wildland firefighting is very different than urban firefighting. Firefighters can spend up to 16 hours a day working on steep hillsides and carrying heavy loads of equipment over extremely rough terrain. Most nights or rest periods are spent in tents pitched close to the area of the burn.

Keeping the needs of Murray City's residents in the forefront, it was determined that the ambulance was needed in the city, so three firefighters and the Aux were sent to Idaho. Deploying manpower resources to wildland fires is a win-win for both the area in need of firefighters and the agencies that provide them. Not only does the region receive more manpower to reduce fires, but our newly-trained firefighters get real-time experience in wildland fire fighting. The federal government has established programs in which the fire departments, who provide that manpower, are reimbursed for the use of their equipment and personnel hours. Any extra money goes back to that department.

Last year at the Legislature, there were bills pertaining to wildland fires and in the next session, there are already proposals about who will cover the suppression costs and efforts to prevent and mitigate wildland fires. We will definitely be watching how these policies and other legislation will affect our city.

We are saddened to watch the news and see the devastation caused by fires - destroying homes and lives. In Washington, three firefighters lost their lives and four others were injured by placing themselves in danger to stop the fires from spreading. I am grateful our team returned safely and that our fire department is in position to go and help others. I hope each of us will do our part to help prevent wildland fires.

Sincerely,



Ted Eyre, Mayor

Photo from left to right, Shiloh Neale, Jeff Puls, Zach Hansen (see below pictures which I've attached in jpeg format).

